R E P O R T  R E S U M E S

ED 010 751 RC 000 843

INDIAN INTEGRATION IN NEVADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BY- HAGLUND, E.A.
NEVADA STATE DEPT. OF EDUCATION, CARSON CITY

PUB DATE 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$1.16 29P.

DESCRIPTORS- #RACIAL INTEGRATION, #AMERICAN INDIANS, RACIAL SEGREGATION, #PUBLIC SCHOOLS, EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY, APTITUDE, EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED, SCHOOL INTEGRATION, INTEGRATED PUBLIC FACILITIES, DORMITORIES, DAY SCHOOLS, #ENGLISH (SECOND LANGUAGE), CARSON CITY

THIS DOCUMENT DISCUSSES THE PROBLEM OF DESEGREGATION IN THE NEVADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS. HISTORICALLY, THE INDIAN WAS NOT ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ENCROACHING CULTURE OF THE WHITE MAN AND LITTLE ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO ENCULTURATE HIM. HE BECAME AN OBJECT OF SUBJUGATION AND EXPLOITATION. AS LATE AS 1930, THE INDIAN DID NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY OR THE NEED TO BE EDUCATED WITH WHITE CHILDREN, WHICH JUSTIFIED SEGREGATED SCHOOLS. THE AUTHOR POINTS OUT THAT IT IS NOW REALIZED ALL PEOPLE HAVE EQUAL, INNATE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL. THUS, IN THE 1940'S, NEVADA BEGAN A PROGRAM TO INTEGRATE THE INDIAN CHILDREN INTO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. TODAY, ONLY ONE STATE-SUPPORTED INDIAN SCHOOL REMAINS, WHICH SERVES THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF INDIANS FROM A FIVE-STATE AREA. (JM)

ED0107751

# INDIAN INTEGRATION
# IN
# NEVADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

BURNELL LARSON
SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Carson City
1966

C. H. POEHLMAN
SUPERVISOR
INDIAN EDUCATION

RC 000 843

# FOREWORD

This article was written by E. A. Haglund who held the position of Supervisor of Indian Education from the inception of this program until 1961.

While the chronology of this article ends with the school year 1957-1958, those portions relating to problems yet to be solved are valid at this date to varying degrees, i.e., socio-economic conditions for the majority of Nevada Indians.

Nevada can look with pride to its achievements in integrating its Indian population in the public schools, however, efforts must still be made to find the answers to the still existing unsolved problems.

C. H. Poehlman, Supervisor
Indian Education

# INDIAN INTEGRATION IN NEVADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The word "integration" in the minds of most Americans, is associated with the southern and border states with large Negro populations. Supreme Court decisions, with resultant legal counter moves to delay the day of integration, have made headlines and created a national awareness of the situation. Few Americans realize that there are other states in the Union which have had and are still faced with an integration problem, not involving Negroes, but American Indians. This article intends to deal with only one phase of the problem of integration, specifically that which concerns the public school program in Nevada in relation to Indian children.

Historically, the problems of integration and desegration of Indian people in Nevada stems from the establishment of reservations and colonies by the military and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The establishment of reservations through treaty by military authorities during the period of western settlement, from 1850 to 1880, resulted in areas of segregation which persist to the present date. In the early 1900's Indian colonies were created by the Bureau, usually on the outskirts of Nevada cities and towns. These colony areas added emphasis to segregation. Newer reservations established in the late 1930's were selected with the view point of establishing model settlements consisting entirely of Indian people. Consequently, Indian settlements became segregated areas within the borders of each state, subject to special rules and regulations established by the Government. The Indian people became wards and their needs were met with varying degrees of success by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Today's problems

in integration stem directly from the factors of residences of Indian people in segregated communities.

The Federal Government, through its Agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, classified Indians as wards of the Government, and therefore assumed the responsibility for the organization and administration of a program of education. Reservation and colony lands were classified as Federal Trust Lands and therefore non-taxable by states, counties or school districts, which action eliminated the usual source of revenue for the construction of school facilities.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs embarked upon a program of constructing schools to serve the educational needs of the segregated children residing in reservation and colony communities. Schools were of two types, boarding and day, the former located primarily on the larger reservations, with dormitory facilities as well as classrooms. The day schools were, as the name implies, non-boarding facility schools. In addition, in Nevada the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with the co-operation of the State, established Stewart Institute as a non-reservation boarding school in 1890. The purpose and function of this school was that of providing educational opportunities for the children of scattered Indian families and opportunities in vocational education for older Indian boys and girls.

A number of factors entered into the establishment of schools by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The special responsibility of the Federal Government for Indian wards, together with the non-taxable nature of reservation lands, made most states reluctant to provide public school facilities under existing conditions. In this connection it might be stated that Indians were not granted citizenship status

by the Federal Government until 1924. Under these circumstances the states felt no legal or moral responsibility for the education of Indian children. Another factor was the remoteness of Indian reservations, which made it advisable for the Indian Bureau to establish its own system of education.

The home conditions of the Indian families were instrumental in establishing the dormitory, or boarding schools. It can also be stated with some authority, that the policy of the Indian Bureau at that time favored the establishment of boarding schools as a vehicle whereby it was hoped that the training afforded in the boarding schools would tend to separate the children from their home and parental background.

Like other western states, Nevada has had the problem of segregated schools, not only those operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but segregated classrooms within the public school system. Fortunately, today Nevada is in the final stage of the integration program, and only one Indian Bureau facility remains....the non-reservation boarding school at Stewart, which enrolls students from five western states.

In order to present a clear appraisal of the status of Indian children attending public schools in Nevada today, contrasted with conditions which existed twenty-five years ago, verbatim quotations are made from the biennial reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the years 1928 and 1932. The comments served to clarify the prevailing attitudes of the people of Nevada in the early 1930's:

> "The theory of having Indian children with whites in school is very good, but in actual practice there is

not so very much noticeable amalgamation taking place, so far as we have been able to see. The Indian will never develop into much more than a very mediocre American citizen. The Elko school tried the amalgamating process for several years. Finally the board and principal decided that it would perhaps be best to segregate the Indian children from the white children, so a separate Indian school was established. It has been running as such for some years, with results that seem to justify the separation. This school has had an attendance of from 20 to 30 pupils mostly in grades from one to six.

"In both these schools, with the aid of Government money, hot lunches have been served at the noon hour to all in attendance. The result of this is that the children in general are better in health than they were before such practice was begun.

"It is our belief that Indian children should be provided with only such fundamental teachings as will fit them to make a living of a decent sort, through the use of simple tools, the simple elements of farming, cattle raising, gardening, washing, ironing, cooking, sewing, etc."

The following comments were made on the school situation at the Duck Valley Reservation in northern Elko County, Nevada:

"In most of the sparsely settled communities where there are Indian children they are taken care of in the schools with the white children. The Indian Reservation at Owyhee, some few years ago, called for a school for several of the children under the management of our State school system. The Government takes care of most of the children on the Reservation as far as the third grade, beyond that grade the children have to go to the Indian School at Carson City or be without further schooling. Many of the older parents felt that if they could have a local school which their children could attend at home it would be so much better for all, so the school was established.

"The attendance in this school has varied from 30 to 40, including all grades from first to eighth. As yet but one Indian child has graduated from the eighth grade. It seems that these children are not able to handle such work as is presented to white children. They should be taught only the fundamentals, health, how to make a living by learning a few of the simple ways of management of farm and household affairs. Such is about the extent to which we can expect these children to go. The courses of study should be offered to them accordingly."

The following comment from the 1932 report continues to express the unchanged attitude toward the education of Indian children in Nevada public schools:

> "Up to the present time attempts have been made to carry the regular work as outlined by the State for white children, but it has been found that these children are not capable of carrying much of this kind of work. In hand work they are usually more skilled than are the white children. They have produced some very creditable work along this line, such as baskets, rugs, garments, beaded and art work. They would spend all their time at this if they were allowed to do so.
>
> "I think that for the best welfare of the children it would be much better to try to teach the fundamentals perhaps to the fifth grade and from then on the older pupils should have less book work and more training along vocational lines. The boys should know how to use and how to raise and care for livestock of all kinds. The girls should be trained in sanitation, in care of the home, how to cook, sew, bake, wash and iron, and how to care for children.
>
> "A good deal of attention is paid to the health of the children. A regular Government physician and a nurse are on the ground all the time. Every day at noon a good, well-balanced meal is served to every child in school. There is ample playground and playground equipment. All kinds of games and sports are encouraged under the direction of the teachers.

"Some time ago one of the Government agents came in to look over conditions to find out what could be done to better school conditions in the district. He left with the promise to do what he could to influence the administration to supply proper buildings and equipment for more vocational work such as has been suggested above. If these can be provided I feel sure the children will receive much more practical training for their future welfare than they can possibly get from the traditional school subjects now imposed upon them."

The attitude toward Indians expressed in the above excerpts from the biennial reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction was general throughout Nevada. The basic premise held that Indian children could not be educated on a comparable basis to the non-Indian population. Associated with this basic premise were a number of additional concepts which expressed themselves in very definite attitudes. First and foremost was the firm belief that Indians were the source and carriers of nearly every disease known to mankind. Tuberculosis, trachoma and venereal infections headed the list of communicable diseases. Therefore, association of non-Indian children with Indians, through being housed in the same classroom, was unthinkable. This attitude still prevails in some communities, despite the progress made by the medical division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the treatment and hospitalization of tuberculosis patients and the eradication of trachoma with sulfa drugs during the early 1940's. The conclusion as to the prevalence of tuberculosis remains, in spite of the fact that the statewide X-ray program and other surveys have shown Indian children

to be as healthy as the average population, or healthier, due to the greater availability of medical care.

An interesting discovery was made by the writer only eight years ago in the lavatory of an elementary school which enrolled ten Indian students in a total of over five-hundred children. One toilet was labeled in red paint, "Indians". The writer also has observed, during his stay in Nevada, that a number of business places, particularly restaurants, often posted a sign reading, "No Indians allowed." Barber shops in some communities still refuse service to Indians.

In the program of integration of Indian children into the public school system, it can be stated that the element of health proved to be the most serious barrier and the most hazardous step toward progress. An additional premise in the general attitude toward Indians in Nevada was that they were improvident, shiftless, lazy and undependable. These attributes were coupled with a fondness for alcoholic beverages. "Drunk as an Indian" was a catch-phrase everywhere in the west. In summary, it might be stated that if an Indian were devoid of all the known faults attributed to him, he would be a good Indian, but also he would be a dead one.

Fortunately, since 1932, the State of Nevada has undergone a great change in the attitude toward the education of Indian children in public schools. The job is still not complete, but it is in the final phase of the program. Not all of the pre-conceived ideas and prejudices have been eradicated, and another decade, at a minimum, will be required before the program can be classified as completely adjusted. Integration is a long-drawn-out process....one which cannot be forced upon a population.

In analyzing the program of integration of Indians into the general population of Nevada, it is advisable for better understanding to cover briefly the historical background of the Nevada Indian in order to secure the proper perspective. Thus follows a brief summary of the Washoe, Paiute and Shoshone Indians.

A tourist traveling the Great Basin area--the vast arid, rocky, barren country which lies between the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains--must marvel that anything, let alone human beings, could survive in such an inhospitable land. However, this was the home of the Wa Pai Shone, a collective term for the native Indian tribes Washoe, Paiute and Shoshone. The eminent anthropologist, Ruth Underhill, in her pamphlet titled "Indians Into White", compares the lot of the Nevada Indian to that of a range cow constantly kept busy wandering about trying to find enough to eat to keep alive.

The Great Basin area is characterized by a number of distinguishing qualities--endless miles of sand, sagebrush and rock, interlaced with low mountain ranges; extremes of temperature in summer and winter are the rule; soil often encrusted with alkali so as to preclude the existence of plant life. With the exception of the higher ranges, moisture is insufficient to maintain large plant life, with the exception of the pinon pine and juniper. Rivers originated within the Basin and terminated in swamps called "sinks". As a result, in order to survive, the Wa Pai Shone had to learn to utilize every asset, however meager, including every form of plant and animal life which grew or lived in this desert area.

As a direct consequence of the uncooperative environment, Indian tribes formed into small groups or bands which sometimes consisted

of a single or multi-family unit, or, in the more advantageous areas, such as Pyramid Lake, numbering several hundred individuals. Each band had a permanent home within a certain designated area located near a water supply. The band was identified by the prevailing form of food in the area, thus the band at Pyramid Lake was called quiwei eaters; the Lovelock band, tule eaters; the Walker Lake band, trout easters, and so on. These bands, scattered about the 113,000 square miles which constituted the State of Nevada, did not find it convenient or necessary to organize into large tribal groups such as the Sioux, the Blackfeet and the Chippewa. With the exception of occasional visits with other bands for festivals or trading, no definite pattern of social organization was in existence at the time of the coming of the white man. Each band was thoroughly democratic in organization, with the women having an equal right to express an opinion. Only after the coming of the white man and through necessity did the bands endeavor to organize on a larger basis.

It was no wonder that the invaders from the east, whose standard of success was the extent of one's possessions, should consider the Wa Pai Shone people the lowest level of Indians yet encountered. They had no permanent abode, so the emigrants found no settled or permanent villages. Their habitations, their clothes, their family and community life, even their religious ways were based on their necessarily nomadic life. This mode of life, developed over a period of hundreds of years, was, in just a short time to be changed drastically. Without any choice in the matter, they had thrust upon them a way of life diametrically opposed to that which had become so integral a part of their being. Their pine nut groves were destroyed,

what little game there was had become depleted and they were shut out from many of the places where they had gathered food. Consequently, they were forced from an active life of traveling from place to place, to an almost sedentary one of tilling the soil in a designated area.

The Indian became a convenient scapegoat upon which to lay the blame for crimes and acts of depredation committed by that lawless element which naturally drifted into a territory so far removed from the forces of law and order. The object of this account is not to white-wash the Indian to the extent of making him appear entirely innocent of any wrong doing, but in altogether too many cases his acts of stealing, lying and attempted cheating were learned from the example set him by his supposedly superior white brother. Even his acts of violence and murder were in the main a desperate attempt to vindicate his manhood and sense of outraged justice for crimes of rape and murder already perpetrated upon some member of his family.

The very first encounter with white men, as far as is known, was with the fur trappers. By about 1825 these explorers had penetrated the territory now comprising Nevada. Famous trappers such as Jedediah Smith, Peter Ogden, Milton Sublette and Captain Bonneville, on their return to the eastern settlements told of their meetings and friendly relations with the Paiutes. However, it was not until about 1840 that their contact with the white man began to have any effect upon their way of life. People from the east were at that time beginning to make their way to California and the main route was through Wa Pai Shone territory.

What information may be gleaned concerning these encounters, tends to give the impression that the Paiutes and the Shoshones met the wagon trains with overtures of friendliness. It was not until 1848 when

California became a part of the United States, and the next year when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill, that the wagon trains became numerous. It is from this time on that emigrants began to settle upon the few good streams and adjoining meadows that for generations had been Paiute and Shoshone hunting grounds. Ranches were established and small settlements sprang up, populated chiefly by the Mormons from the Salt Lake, Utah region. These people, convinced that the Indians were the lost tribes of Israel, treated them with fairness and kindness. This period of peaceful and friendly relationship between the Indians and white settlers lasted but a few years and ended when the Mormons withdrew.

Gold had been discovered and had been mined for some few years in the western part of Nevada, but it was not until the discovery of silver in large quantities that miners came in large numbers and soon mining camps lined the territory belonging to the Paiutes. The most important of these settlements became Virginia City. It is in this period that the old wandering life of the Indians began to be seriously disrupted. The Mormon ranches had been taken over by people not in sympathy with the Indians, raising cattle to supply meat to the mining camps. These cattle ate and destroyed the seed plants the Paiutes had formerly gathered for food. Their groves of pine trees were cut down to provide the mining camps with timber and fuel.

In the period following the discovery of silver, the destruction of the Indian way of life occurred at a rapid rate. Large tracts of land were stripped of the living things upon which the Indians had been dependent for food, shelter and clothing. The miners, having come to take from an inhospitable land sufficient wealth to enable them to return to their former homes in the shortest possible time, showed little patience

or tolerance toward anything or anyone unfortunate enough to be in their way. Removed sufficiently from any restraining influence of organized government, they took what they wanted ruthlessly.

Thus, the Indians, bereft of their customary sources of livelihood, had to depend upon what means the white man placed at their disposal. Some found work with the ranchers and many others became wood-cutters and general laborers in the mining camps. They were employed when needed and as easily dismissed. Many of their daughters, believing themselves married, soon learned to their sorrow that they had been taken only to serve as household help, and in time would be left to shift for themselves and whatever children they might have acquired. Such people who could be so easily duped and imposed upon fell even lower in the estimation of the white people. On the part of the Indians, resentment against the white people grew into a hatred that finally flamed into violence.

These Indians, so long peaceful, had no organization for war. Under the pressure of their outraged pride and resentment, they chose chiefs, and there ensued what history calls the Paiute War. It consisted chiefly of two encounters, one at Pyramid Lake in 1860, in which the Indians, with their inferior weapons, drove off an estimated number of four-hundred white men. The next year, 1861, another encounter occurred at Battle Mountain. These so-called battles, along with a number of lesser events, were the cue for the settlers to raise a cry to their government in Washington, D. C. to send soldiers to defend their lives and property against these marauding savages. Little or nothing was mentioned concerning the protection of the life, property and self-respect of the Indians against the settlers.

Nevada had become a part of the Union with California, but as yet had not become a state, nor had it even been organized as a territory. Miles of unsettled and desolate wilderness separated it from Washington and the nearest seat of authority was in California. Now the United States Government began to realize that some organized authority must be established. In 1859 a better and faster link of communication was established by the completion of the railroad. In 1861 Nevada became a territory, and in 1864 was admitted as a state. The cry of the settlers for protection had brought troops from California in 1860. In that year a military post was established at Fort McDermitt. Most of the Indians who were responsible for, and had taken part in the attacks, were taken as prisoners by the personnel of the fort. Many of these Indians enjoyed the first humane treatment they had experienced for some years. They were clothed and fed, and according to the writings of Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, were happy again for a time.*

There were officials in the United States Government who realized the obligation of the country toward the Indians, and as early as 1859 survey parties were locating tracts of land to be given to the Indians as their own. No mention is made in contemporary writings of the irony of giving to the Indians as their own, something that they had considered theirs for generations. As early as 1860 Pyramid Lake and some surrounding territory was considered as reserved for the Indians, although there was no official legislation to the effect until 1874. In 1867 Fort McDermitt, abandoned by the army, was turned over to the Indians, officially so in 1870. Other tracts of land reserved for their use were: Moapa, 1873; Walker River, 1874; Fallon, 1880; Owyhee, 1874.

* Life Among The Paiutes, 1883.

The intentions of the Government were to hold these areas of land as Federal property upon which the Indians were to be taught how to till the soil and finally be made self-supporting.

Too often the intentions of the Federal Government and the agents appointed to carry out its directives, did not coincide. The early history of Indian reservations in America is generally one of confusion and mismanagement. The position of Indian Agent very often appears to have been considered an opportunity to enrich the individual agent at the expense of the Indian. The lack of equipment and funds to accomplish the objectives of the program was the most serious handicap faced by conscientious Indian Agents. Left to shift for themselves, many Indians did succeed in raising occasionally few crops of wheat, oats and barley.

This condition of affairs led to a spirit of discontent and non-cooperation, and many Indians left the reservations. Some made an attempt to return to their old life; others found seasonal work on ranches, while many found a means of bare subsistence living on the fringes of towns. This period from about 1890 to 1934 was, for many of these people, one of slow moral and physical decline. Looked upon as a nuisance, and merely tolerated on the outer edges of society, they gradually adopted the doctrince of the superiority of the white man. Living as they did on the outskirts of towns in hovels, poor and unable to pay taxes, they were denied the conveniences enjoyed by the white settlers. It is not to be wondered that they fell into habits of laziness, uncleanliness and drunkenness. They were permitted to adopt the bad habits of sloth, insobriety and even immorality of the white settlers, but were denied the teaching and opportunity to practice their good habits of industry, cleanliness and brotherhood.

The United States Government set up irrigation projects on the reservations and here were to be found small bands making an attempt at farming. On many of these reservations were a mixture of Shoshones, Washoes and Paiutes. On some of the reservations there were Paiutes only. Many of these people spoke English, at least well enough to be understood. By this time, many of the Indians had acquired the ways of the settlers in regard to clothing, food and shelter. Patterns of social behavior were also adopted and various religious denominations established churches and assigned personnel to carry on missionary activities. The Indian Bureau continued its policy of endeavoring to aid the Indian people in the development of their lands, provided health services and issued rations to needy families. The lack of an overall program to include long-range planning for the rehabilitation of the Indian tribal groups was the most serious handicap during this transitional period.

In June, 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act was passed by Congress. This law was intended to give the Indian a better opportunity to govern himself and raise his economic level. Prior to this, the reservations had been cut up into small parcels of land and allotted to the Indians to do with what they willed, except to sell the land, which was held in trust for them by the Federal Government. The theory was that having a piece of land to do with as they chose would give them a feeling of security and independence. Most of the Indians knew too little about farming to make a success of it, and many, driven by economic necessity, leased their lands. What small amounts they received were soon gone and they were then left in a worse situation than before. This new law stopped the disposal of Indian land and provided for the purchase

of new land. Those who were willing, were given a piece of land, a number of cattle, loaned some money for farm equipment and had agents appointed to help them in the operation of their farms. Today, many of these families are making a good annual income, are sending their children to school for instruction, have money in the bank and are looked upon with respect, at least by those who have not retained prejudice and intolerance.

While this law did nothing concerning land already allotted, it did contain very different provisions governing land to be purchased. Henceforth, the land was to be controlled by the whole tribe and could not be sold or disposed of in any way. Individual families were to have land allotted for use, but subject to the rules and regulations made by the Tribal Council. A special provision of the Indian Reorganization Act established the procedure for self-government for tribal groups. Organization and incorporation of the group were permitted and an elected governing body, known as the Tribal Council, was created. Through this procedure a tribal group residing on a reservation could become a self-governing unit, empowered through appropriate bylaws to manage its own affairs. As a corporate entity, the tribal group was deemed capable of borrowing funds or establishing credit with which to purchase needed equipment and other supplies from an established revolving fund. Most tribal units in Nevada have taken advantage of the Indian Reorganization Act with very beneficial results.

The State of Nevada, has, at this time, reached the final stage in the integration of Indian children into the public school program. The last remaining day school, located on the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation in northern Humboldt County (75 miles north of Winnemucca), ceased to function on June 1, 1956. Previously Bureau-operated day schools located at Schurz (Walker River Reservation),

Owyhee (Duck Valley Reservation), Stillwater Indian Reservation near Fallon, Campbell Ranch (Yerington), Nixon (PYramid Lake Reservation), Duckwater Reservation, Yomba Reservation, Moapa Reservation, Lovelock and Reno Indian colonies were converted to public schools or closed by instituting transportation routes to nearby public schools.

The earliest conversion occurred in 1930 at Owyhee in northern Elko County, where three day schools operated in conjunction with a one-teacher public school which served the children of non-Indian Federal employees. The Tribal Council, at the request of parents, petitioned for the establishment of a public school for all the children residing on the reservation. Funds were made available for the construction of a new school building by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and when the facilities were completed the day schools ceased to operate. This event marked a milestone in the advancement of public school education for Indian children in Nevada because it was the first expression of determination on the part of Indian parents for a public school program for their children. Later, other Indian groups were to follow the leadership shown at this time.

In the mid 1930's, the Indian Bureau, in response to the recommendations of Congress, underwent a change of policy with respect to the education of Indian children in the public schools of the nation, as opposed to education in Federal schools. In 1934 Congress enacted the Johnson-O'Malley Act, which enabled the Bureau of Indian Affairs to contract with states and local school districts for the education of Indian children. The Act appropriated funds for the administration of the program and for the payment of tuition to school districts which enrolled eligible children. The Act was especially timely, inasmuch as the United States was undergoing a severe depression, and the assurance of a

subsidy payment served as an incentive to many school districts, particularly small rural schools.

In the State of Nevada, the Indian Bureau followed a program of contracting with local school districts for the education of Indian children until 1947. At that time it was deemed advisable and advantageous to place the program on a State level with the State Department of Education. Under this procedure, a position of State Director of Indian Education was established in the Department of Education and under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education, and charged with the responsibility for further integration of Indian children into the public school program. This pattern had been established in California in 1936, followed later by Washington and Oregon, and now numbers 14 states, most of which are located west of the Mississippi River.

In the mid 1940's, the State of Nevada, with the cooperation of Nevada Indian Agency, instituted the second phase of the program of integration, namely that of converting Bureau-operated day schools to public schools. Following the action taken on the Duck Valley Reservation in 1930, little or no effort was expended toward conversion of day schools until 1945, when the Indian residents of the Walker River Reservation petitioned for the consolidation of their three-teacher day school with the one-teacher public school located at the edge of town.

The Indian parents on Pyramid Lake Reservation, the following year, petitioned for arrangements to enable their children of high school age to attend the Fernley School, 20 miles distant. The successful operation of this venture prompted the parents to request extension to 7th and 8th grade students the following year. Within another year, the same group petitioned for the establishment of a public school on the Reservation to replace the day school. An interesting aspect in connection

with the request of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Indians for a public school was the stipulation that it operate only through the first six grades, and that arrangements be continued for the education of 7th and 8th grade students at Fernley. The Indian parents were unanimous in their reasoning that in order to secure the best education possible, it was imperative for their children to have the earliest practicable opportunity to attend the school where they would constitute a minority of the total student body. For this reason, attendance of their children at a re-established high school a shorter distance from home was vetoed by all parents, due to the fact that its enrollment would be predominently Indian. The advantage of associating with non-Indian children was considered to be a paramount factor.

Following the lead of earlier tribal groups, the remaining Indian reservation communities petitioned for establishment of public schools to replace the Bureau-operated day schools. Consolidation with nearby schools was followed wherever possible, and where this opportunity did not exist, public school districts were established. In some cases transportation to nearby school districts was instituted. Johnson-O'Malley State Contract Funds were used to eliminate any added cost to the school districts incidental to the education of Indian children, particularly those residing with their parents on tax-exempt trust lands. Grants were made for general support purposes, transportation aid and the operation of school lunch programs.

As stated previously, the final day school, located on Fort McDermitt Reservation, closed its doors at the end of the 1955-1956 school year. On the morning of September 4, 1956, 87 Paiute children, ranging in grades from one through ten, boarded two new school buses for the

eight-mile trip to their new school in the town of McDermitt. Here, for the first time in their lives, most of the children would be attending a school with non-Indians. By the end of the first month the number of reservation children had increased to 105, out of a total enrollment of 156.

Today, only one Federally-operated school facility exists in Nevada...Stewart Indian School, located three miles south of Carson City. This school has an enrollment area covering five states, and the bulk of its enrollment consists of Navajo students from New Mexico and Arizona, who are engaged in a five-year training program. Prior to 1940, Stewart School had an enrollment of 400 Nevada Indian children. Today its enrollment is less than 100. As the Nevada children have been integrated into the public school program, their places have been taken by Navajo boys and girls.

The criteria for enrollment in Stewart Indian School should be made clear, inasmuch as it consists of the following factors:

1. No school available. This affects only a small number of Nevada Indian children at the high school level who reside in remote areas where the local school offers instruction only in grades one through eight.
2. Orphans and half orphans with no reestablished home.
3. Unsatisfactory home conditions which make enrollment at boarding school advisable.
4. Vocational training.

As the program of public school education has developed, it has been possible for Nevada Indian Agency to successfully curtail enrollment in the Stewart School by eliminating, in successive years, the lower elementary grades. It is possible, that within a few years,

through the operation of the A.D.C. Program and Boarding Home Placement Service, that the Nevada enrollment in the Stewart facility will be eliminated.

One very fortunate aspect of the program of integration in Nevada was the enactment of Title IV to Public Law 815 (Federal Aid for School Construction). Title IV specifically applied to Indian children and need for new facilities, particularly on the Indian reservations. The non-taxable status of reservation trust lands made impossible the issuance of bonds for school construction to replace inadequate facilities inherited from the Indian Bureau. With the enactment of Title IV by the 83rd Congress, these districts became eligible for Federal grants because of their unique status. Consequently, it has been possible during the last five years, to build the following: A complete high school plant at Owyhee on the Duck Valley Reservation; an addition to the Schurz School on the Walker River Reservation; a new modern rural school on the Duckwater Reservation; a similar facility at Yomba, and the new integrated school in the town of McDermitt. Needless to say, the fact of being able to construct new facilities was most important to consolidation ventures.

Although the program of integration of Nevada Indian children into the public schools has made tremendous advancement since 1930, a number of problems remain which are limited factors to complete success.

The present enrollment of Indian children at the elementary and secondary school levels serves to refute the thesis expounded by the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction in his 1930 report which stated, "Having Indian children attend school with non-Indian was all right in theory, but not in actual practice." Dispelled also by experience was his confirmed belief that Indian children were incapable of carrying

the regular, or prescribed curriculum of Nevada public schools, and therefore needed a special elementary program in a segregated classroom. With the exception of a language handicap, resultant from a bilingual family situation, it has been proved that Indian children do learn and achieve on a basis comparable to their lighter-complexioned schoolmates. Standard test results indicate the usual pattern...a small percentage above average, a similar percentage in the lowest bracket, with the bulk of the group resting in the average classification.

The basic factor which tends to limit further progress stems from economic and social conditions which exist on the various reservation and colony settlements. The very low income per family unit among residents of the reservations is the greatest underlying cause for the number of student dropouts at the secondary level, and for the small number of Indian high school graduates enrolled in college. Disproportionately large numbers of high school students are forced by economic necessity to assume, at the earliest date, the position of wage earner. As a result of the lack of training, the only avenues of employment open are those requiring unskilled labor, seasonal agricultural occupations or enlistment in the military forces. An income of less than $1,000.00 per family unit is insufficient for basic family needs, let alone to assist a young Indian man or woman to secure college training. A realistic scholarship program must be developed as an incentive to secure the enrollment of more Indian high school graduates in institutions of learning beyond the high school level. Similarly, steps must be taken to improve the financial status of reservation families, either through a program of better use of land resources, or through resettlement of Indian families in industrial areas.

The Indian colonies located near the edges of Nevada towns and cities are, for the most part, slum areas, consisting of one and two room

homes. The lack of sanitary facilities, sewage disposal and water supply are serious handicaps. Indian colony land, like all reservations, is tax exempt. This fact makes improvement by the local city or county an impossibility. Only through direct appropriation by Congress can funds be secured for the improvement of Indian colony settlements. A suggested remedy for the colony situation which merits due consideration, calls for resettlement or relocation of all Indian families as a means of ending the existence of these small, segregated settlements.

The integration of Indian children into the public school program in Nevada has been a gradual process extending over a period of years. It has been accomplished by the mutual efforts of school administrators and teachers working from the local and from the state level with officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and with Indian tribal groups. The latter group has played a most important part in the establishment of public schools for the education of their children. The readiness of the Indian tribal group for integration has been an equally important factor in the process of integration. The education of the public within a community to accept integration was the highest barrier as it involved the eradication of preconceived ideas as to the mental ability, health and cleanliness of the Indian students.

The motto of the integration program might have been, "Move slowly with certainty." In a number of cases the attitude adopted toward integration can be expressed in the phrase, "Try it for a year and see if it works." As a result of this overall attitude on the part of school administrators, there have been no "unconsolidations", and there have been no requests by Indian parents to return to Indian Bureau-operated schools. Nevada has assumed a place of leadership among the states having large Indian populations, in its program of integration of

Indian children into the public schools. The attitude of the Indian parents toward the program can be very thoroughly expressed by the comment of a mother whose 8th grade daughter attended public school for the first time, "In the reservation school she was always a problem. In the public school she is just like any other girl her age."